

A

REVIEW

OF THE

Affairs of *FRANCE*:

Purg'd from the Errors and Partiality of *News-Writers* and
Petty-Statefmen, of all Sides.

Tuesday, December 19. 1704.

THE Trade from *France* to *England*, no sooner came to be carried on to our Advantage, but by a fate peculiar to *England*, as if Born never to do it self Good, our mistaken Politicks push us upon eager Prohibitions.

There can be but two Reasons in the World, as to Trade, for prohibiting Commerce with any Nation:

1. Preventing Intelligence with, and Supplies to them as Enemies: Or,
2. Some Exceeding Advantage in Trade, which the Enemy has over the Nation so prohibiting the Trade.

As to the First, Preventing Intelligence or Supplies, 'tis plain, by the Course of Things, 'tis a Difficulty past the Skill of Art, and Impracticable, tho' with the most refin'd Management in the World; and since the Enemy will have Intelligence and Correspondence in spite of all Interruption of Commerce, to what purpose do we make use of a Prohibition Injurious to our own Trade, as a Means to compass an End that is out of our Reach? Knaves will Correspond, Negotiate with, and betray the Affairs of their Country to the Enemy, and 'tis impossible to prevent it, unless we could bear a General Embargo of Shipping, during the whole War.

As to the Advantage of Trade, when the War began with *France* in 1688, it was, as I

have observ'd, all on their Side, and therefore a Prohibition then was the most rational Thing in the World; and a very good Testimony, that our Representatives, at that time, knew what was for our Advantage.

And here let me take the freedom to say, That the Interruption our Prohibition of Trade gave to the General Commerce of *France*, had given a great Stroke to the Ruine of that Kingdom, had we at the same time kept our own Trade secure from the Hands of their Numerous Rovers.

I have nothing to say what Mismanagement, or Mismanagers in our own Affairs, occasioned this Terrible Neglect, the Guilty must answer it in the next World, for I see no probability of their being call'd to an Account for it in this: But I must be just to my Title, I cannot pass this over, and yet call these Sheets a *Review of the Affairs of France*; and therefore I crave the Reader's Patience to give a brief Account of the *French Trade*, from the beginning of the last War to this Time.

I am sorry I shall not please some Gentleman, who having no Gust to these Things, will be interrupted in their reading these Sheets, expecting to hear of *Bavaria*, *Savoy*, and the Affairs of War; but others again, who have long waited for my entring upon this Point, and had their Turn of Expectation, claim the Right of being oblig'd; and above all, Gentlemen, the

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Course of our Story commands this Matter upon the Stage : Causes and Consequences are Sullen and Arbitrary, and I cannot omit to enter upon our Ruin'd Merchants, our Injur'd Trade, and the Conquests *France* has made upon our General Negoce, without making a Chasm in our Story so large, as would entirely break the Chain, and rob it of all manner of Coherence.

Nor can I help it, if those Gentlemen, who have a Natural Aversion to a long Story, are tyr'd with this Unpleasant, and perhaps to them most Useless Subject ; I profess'd at the beginning, and the World shall find me *L'Homme de Parole*, that I shall follow and keep close to necessary Truth, and holdly go thro' every part of my design, without regard to Caviil, Critical Banter, or all manner of dislike, without fear of the Resentment of Power and Party, and this is all the Apology the World will have any occasion to expect from me.

" I know abundance of Gentlemen are pleas'd to say, Our Trade is in the most flourishing Condition that ever it was in these Ages, our Credit highest, our Cash greatest, and our Merchants better bottom'd than ever.

Others again, like *Ahab's* Prophet *Micaiah*, are always Prophecying Evil Tidings, always crying, Woe, Woe ! Woe to our Trade, the *Dutch* will run away with it ; Woe to our Manufactures, Foreigners Under-sell us ; Woe to our Wooll, it all goes away to *France* ; Woe to our Poor, they will have no Employment ; Woe to Navigation, the *French* take all our Ships ; Woe to our Northern Borders, the *Scots* will Invade us ; and thus they look upon the *English* Trade, as an Old Man under a Chronical Distemper, a Body in a deep Heelick, or an Incurable Consumption.

Shall one single unhappy Author confront this Opinion-wise Generation ? Pardon me, ye Sons of a Short-sighted People ; neither of these Extreams are mix'd either to Sence, Fact, or the Nature of the Thing.

Were my Head, if cut off, of any use to the State, or were it good for any thing where it is, I would gage it to a meaner Trifle, if that could be found, That I would make out all the following Particulars to be true, in relation to the Present State of our *English* Trade ; and I appeal to the whole Nation ; I appeal to the Parliament ; nay, I'll appeal yet higher, to the Unerring Substantial Judgment of those Honourable Persons singl'd out of the whole Na-

tion for the Improvement of their Native Country, in a High Commission of Trade.

First, I would venture to prove, That tho' our Trade is not in the most flourishing Condition it ever was, for the Stop of the *Spanish* Trade, must be allow'd a deadly Blow to our Manufactures ; yet that, in general, our Trade has thriven upon the War, notwithstanding I compute above 30 Millions Sterling lost at Sea, by *French* Privateers.

Secondly, Our Trade, would any Branch of our Government but take it into an especial Patronage, is at this time capable of the greatest Improvements that ever it was, since *England* was a Nation, and capable of being made the greatest and most flourishing in the World.

Thirdly, That our Trade is absolutely Invulnerable, but our own Shameful Scandalous Neglect, and wilful laying it open to our Enemies.

Fourthly, That our Trade is shamefully Abandon'd and neglected by our selves, either by those whose proper Business it is to be Patrons and Guardians of that Capital Article of the Nations Prosperity ; or by the Ignorance, and Unqualified Circumstances of those that are entrusted with the Direction of this Fatherless Child.

On the other hand, with the same freedom, I affirm,

First, That were right Measures prescrib'd, but *who am I, to Dissuade* ? for the Government of our Trade, none of the Woes we have so often heard, can come to pass.

1. The *Dutch* can no way Injure our Trade, but are helps with us to the settling all the Considerable Trade in the World, in these Parts ; and tho' the Native Prejudice some People have at that Diligent Nation, prompts them to be always repining at them ; I take leave to say, 'Tis not the *Dutch* Cunning, but our Folly ; not the *Dutch* Diligence, but our Laziness and Luxury ; not the *Dutch* out-doing us, but our undoing our selves, that Injures our Trade.

2. Woe to our Manufactures and Poor—— And here I take leave to affirm, what I have to no purpose said at large elsewhere.

(1.) We have no Poor in *England* ; but what we make so our selves, for want of Conduct and Regulation.

(2.) We have no want of Employment for our Poor, but want Poor for our Employment.

(3.) All our Publick Workhouses in England, are Mistakes in Trade, ruinous to our General Employ, and Encreasers of our Poor.

And to conclude, with the utmost Deference and Respect to the Representative Body of the Nation, now in Parliament, the Bill depending in that Honourable House for the Settlement and Employment of the Poor, has one Unhap-

py Clause in it; which, should it pass, as I think all English Men ought to pray it may not, is capable of giving the last ruining Blow to our Manufactures, and of being the greatest Destruction to our Trade, and Encrease of our Poor, that could ever be brought upon them; which, I doubt not, will be consider'd, and rectify'd in that Assembly.

ADVICE from the Scandal. CLUB.

THE following Letter has moving Arguments to a speedy Reply; the Society are very willing to oblige all their Enquirers with what speed they can, but are Unhappy they cannot immediately answer every Case.

Gentlemen;

I Had but newly read your Review of this Day, with a great deal of Pleasure, when I received a Letter, which obliges me to give you this Trouble, upon a Case that I know is not feign'd, viz. Whether a Person ought to prefer the Life of a Lover, to their own comfortable Subsistence in the World? Supposing the Party Below'd, have been no way culpable in Administring to the Rise and Progress of the vehement Passion; and in case of Compliance, both must, to all Appearance, lead a Mean and Anxious Life. I won't Compliment you so far, as to say, Your Determination will be decisive in the Matter; yet your Judgment will be of weight to one of the Parties concern'd; and therefore would desire it with all the speed your Innumerable Engagements will allow. If you had a Spirit of Discerning, and could Distinguish between such an Address you to please their Fancy, and such, as come to have their Actions directed, your Answer would be sooner, than, as the Case stands, can be expected by

Decemb. 9. Your very humble Servant.

1704.

If, Sir, you only Inquire what this Person ought to do, without doubt, he ought to Exercise his Reason, and Reflect with the Judgment and Calmness of a Man of Sense, provided he has any; and he would then see, That the Preposterous Humour of Love, grown up to a kind of Frenzy, is acted with an Inconsiderate Rashness, pointed directly at the Ruine of both Parties.

He ought to consider, That whenever the Severities of his Circumstances come to pinch him, and make him sensible of his Error, all

the Reproaches he will make himself on that Head, will wound and strike at this thing he calls Love—— And if ever Time or Accident lessens it but the least degree, he will ever after look on her as the Cause of all his Misfortunes, and hate her in a Proportion to his present Passion.

The Woman, if she has a Soul to consider, ought to reflect, that for a Woman to Marry a Man that steps down to her, and that is to be Unhappy only on her Account, as long as he lives, she ought to have a vast Opinion of her own Charms, she ought to know her self capable of keeping up his Flame, or she binds herself in Chains of Slavery; exposes her self to all the Indignities and Reproaches that may be the Consequence of his too late Repentance.

The Society, who have always a tender Regard to the Sex, are of the Opinion, That a Woman of Virtue and Sense, tho' never so mean in Circumstance, had better depend upon Providence, and any Endeavour of Maintenance, than Marry a Man enough above her to make her a Servant, and not enough above her to be able to make both ease.

But if the Gentleman who sends this, agrees, that we are talking to a Man in Love—— Whether it be with the Person in particular, or as a Woman in general; in short, whether the Frenzy be in the Head or the T——, he must then suppose us beating the Air, and all he can write; or we reply, will be to as much purpose, as to talk Gospel to a *Kettle-Drum*.

However, if the Gentleman who sent this, thinks it may be particularly useful, he may have some farther Observations on this Head, on a Letter to the Society; since as Publick usefulness is the principal End of this Paper, they are loth to mix it with any thing Special or Particular.

To the Scandal, &c.

Gentlemen,

Your Curious Resolves in other Queries, give you the trouble of these: I don't question, but you are sensible the Town is pester'd with two Observators at this time; the one pretending to no Wit, the World says, he has a great deal more than ever he thought of: The other says himself, That he has Wit, and the World won't allow him any at all. — The one pretends to Principles, but denies all in his Practice, leaves that to Men that are paid for their Piety, as he is for his Principles: The other declares for the preeminence of a good Conscience, void of Offence; and as for his Principles he leaves them to B—— B—— G, to Publish; because he pretends to know 'em best. Now, Gentlemen, your Opinions are desired, to know which of these two are best Qualified for an Observator? He that has most Honesty, and least Wit, or he that has most Wit and least Honesty? Or whether the two Qualifications may not be found in one of these Men?

Yours to Command.

Had the Gentleman that wrote the following Letter, put in a third Observator as famous for Wit without Honesty, and Rehearsing without Truth, as he says there are for other things, the Society had given a direct Answer; but as it is, they content themselves with giving the Gentleman the satisfaction of seeing his Letter in Print, and the Persons an Opportunity of answering for themselves.

The Gentleman who Corrected the Society for their Quotation, *Review* N. 81. is desir'd to observe, The Printer acknowledges the Mistake of the Text, said to be the Words of the Apostle, *I have many things to say, but you cannot bear them now*; which were the Words of our Saviour——The other Observation that Gentleman is pleas'd to make of a Word, which indeed is a Phrase assum'd by way of Satyr, they think it justifiable, and if he does not, they require his Objection.

A Gentleman who sent us a Letter about distributing Charity, has an Answer left for him; if he please to call or send to Mr. Mathew's.

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